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Lhaysek's First Poem; The Colors, The Fragments, The Camels

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Lhaysek's First Poem

LUISA VILLANI

The rose petals in your left pocket
are from me. I didn't put them
in your right, because the left
is where you keep your keys,
and sometime this afternoon
when you're searching
for something to take you
far from where you are, I want you
to remember this morning,
before the day rushed toward us,
after we brushed it aside. I too love,
I too, feel the queries
the realities of the day make
into the land of dreams.

The Colors, The Fragments, The Camels

LUISA VILLANI

I tell you about the lithograph
on my apartment wall
back in the states: Paul Klee,
“Two Dromedaries and a Donkey,”
or “Two Donkeys and a Dromedary.”
I don’t remember which.
I do remember the colors, triangles of green
and orange, obtuse parallelograms
of brown. It reminded me of a blanket,
the kind my mother made
from bits of old coats
and pillowcases, in the times
before my family had money.
We became W-T rich, I say
and you ask me what that means.
It means my mother was poor,
white, and from the South. You’re puzzled
I know, because you move
the conversation back a step,
the way I move my poems
when I don’t want to dwell where they are:
“I was in Afghanistan. I’ve actually
seen camels.” Now we are going to talk
of war, of the night the world exploded
in your hands. I hate speaking in wounds,
but it seems we’re already there.
“Camels I think are mad at God
because he made them. They stink
with hate, inside and out. I saw one once
burst like a balloon filled with blood
when a mine went off inside it.” Is that

Villani: Lhaysek's First Poem; The Colors, The Fragments, The Camels

how it happened, how you lost
 your fingers? I don't dare ask.
 I keep thinking of my lithograph,
 of how I like my nature
 portioned into culture.
 I keep thinking of the two ears
 joined beneath my pubic bone,
 the red lobes ready to hear
 the small sounds of rain
 you make inside me. Is this then
 the journey, the way we leave
 our bodies to become boats
 rocking in steady seas? Across
 seven oceans I'm already standing
 at a window, remembering
 the patchwork's rise and fall, as I watch
 a homunculus of clouds
 knot the sky with storms. From this distance
 nothing seems real. No words
 can hurt. Rain then,
 is a remedy for righting
 the world's wrongs, water a way
 of jostling thoughts
 into the small, palpable stories
 we keep beneath our covers.
 I'll never look at that lithograph
 the same way,
 the colors, the fragments, the camels.